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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/033,970	12/20/2001	Karl Hansen	24,954-25	9112

7590 12/23/2005

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EXAMINER

COTTINGHAM, JOHN R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2116

DATE MAILED: 12/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/033,970	Applicant(s) HANSEN, KARL	
	Examiner John R. Cottingham	Art Unit 2116	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,10,11,13,14,25 and 26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 3 4 6 10 11 13 14 25 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

2. Claims 1, 3, 6, 10-11, 13-14, and 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Lin U.S. Patent Application 2002/0122712. Lin shows all of the claimed subject matter of an apparatus for coupling in Figures 2-7.

Regarding claim 1, an apparatus for coupling comprising: a first generally planar member 5 having a pair of generally opposed surfaces and an slot 54 therebetween disposed at an engaging region; a coupling member 4 having an external thread set and having a complementary portion 58 for engaging the aperture of the planar member; and a non-planar member 7 having an internal thread set adapted to engage the external thread set of the coupling member thereby connecting the non-planar member to the first planar member, wherein portions of the pair of generally opposed surfaces of the planar member extend into the thread set of the non-planar member.

Regarding claim 3, wherein the slot 54 is formed in a region adjacent an edge portion of the first planar member.

Regarding claim 6, wherein the coupling member has a larger diameter dimension than a thickness dimension of the first planar member.

Regarding claim 10, an apparatus for connecting two members together comprising: a first member 5 having a pair of centrally opposed major surfaces and defining an engaging region, and a slot 54 disposed at said engaging region; an elongate threaded coupling member 4 having an external thread set and an engaging portion 58 for engaging the slot of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the slot; and a second member 7 having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, wherein said external thread set of the threaded coupling member is threadedly received within the internal thread set, wherein portions of the first member extend into the internal thread set of the second member.

Regarding claim 11, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member 4 is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having a threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

Regarding claim 13, wherein the thickness of the first member is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

Regarding claim 14, an apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising: a first member 5 having an slot aperture 54 disposed proximate an edge; an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set 40 and an engaging portion 58 corresponding to the slot aperture of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the slot aperture and extending away from the edge of the first member 6, and a second member 7 having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the

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threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the first member to secularly bind the first member to the second member.

Regarding claim 25, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member 4 is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

Regarding claim 26, wherein the thickness of the first member is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lin U.S. Patent 6,474,920. Lin does not show more than one aperture 54 and connector 58. However, duplicating the components of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art. In re Harza, 274 F.2d 669, 124 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960).

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 9/28/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the hole 54 of the Lin reference is not a slot because applicant argues it does not meet the definition of a slot. Applicant states "the accepted definition of slot is 'a narrow, elongated, depression, groove, notch, slit or aperture, esp.

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a narrow opening for receiving or admitting some thing, as a coin or letter' See, *Random House Webster 's Unabridged Dictionary Second Edition*, 2001." The Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's interpretation of this definition, because the term "or" allows for a slot to be any or all of the elements. The slot 545 of Lin is elongated in the depth range, it is also an aperture and a narrow opening. Applicant is not claiming the slot to be oblong or any other shape other than a circle.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John R. Cottingham whose telephone number is (571) 272-7079. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne Browne can be reached on (571)272-3670. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



John R. Cottingham

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Primary Examiner
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